

**MINUTES
LINK TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

January 18, 2022

3:00 p.m.

Columbia Station 3rd Floor, 300 South Columbia Street, Wenatchee, WA

ATTENDANCE

Board members attending in person: Chair Rob Tidd, Jim Fletcher, Bob Goedde, Mark Kulaas, and Randy Agnew

Board members attending through ZOOM platform: Marc Straub, Kyle Steinburg, Anne Hessburg, Bob Bugert, Tiffany Gering, Michael Buckingham and Joyce Huber

Link Transit Staff: Richard DeRock, Nick Covey, Howard Johnson, Lynn Bourton, Eric West, Brenda Lamb, Justin Brockwell, and Laura Leon

Legal Counsel: Erin McCool (Ogden Murphy Wallace) and John Lee (Summit Law)

Absent / Excused: Paul Parmley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rob Tidd called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was established with 11 board members present at that time.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

(None).

3. CONSENT AGENDA

The following Consent Agenda items were submitted for approval:

3.1 *Minutes of the November 16, 2021* Board Meeting & Public Hearing on the 2022 Budget and Title VI Plan and Program for 2021-2024.

3.2 *Accounts Payable Vouchers from November 2021* totaling \$553,658.09 & Payroll Vouchers from November 2021 totaling \$586,471.83

3.3 *Accounts Payable Vouchers from December 2021* totaling \$653,206.37 & Payroll Vouchers from December 2021 totaling \$582,889.80.

Board Action:

There were no requests for corrections or changes to any of the Consent Agenda items.

Jim Fletcher moved to approve all Consent Agenda business items as presented.

Bob Goedde seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.

***Motion Carried
Passed Unanimously***

4. BOARD ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Welcome and Introduction of New Board Members

Chair Rob Tidd welcomed the 2022 Link Transit Board of Directors and introduced new incoming members:

- Mayor Michael “Mike” Buckingham representing the City of Entiat.
- City Councilman Mark Kulaas, representing the City of Wenatchee.
- City Councilwoman Anne Hessburg, representing the City of Leavenworth.

4.2 Election of a Board Vice-Chair for the 2022 Year

Chair Tidd opened the floor for nominations to elect a Vice-Chair for 2022. The Vice-Chair will then serve as Chair of the Board in 2023.

Nominations:

Marc Straub was nominated by Randy Agnew and Jim Fletcher seconded the nomination.

Board Action:

Chair Tidd called for a vote in favor of electing Marc Straub to serve as Vice-chair during the 2022 year.

VOTE: All in favor with **11** *voting* board members present for this vote.

***Motion Carried
Passed Unanimously***

4.3 Board Subcommittees and Appointments

When planning for the upcoming 2022 year, Chair Tidd requested feedback from the 2021 Finance Committee to determine the efficiency and necessity of keeping the committee in place in 2022. The previous Finance Committee Chair, Jim Fletcher provided insight and described a limited need for the committee and detailed a lack of a workload in 2021. Other perspectives were shared and it was specifically noted that the committee provided an opportunity to deep dive into topics, and review items in detail before making a recommendation to the full board.

Chair Tidd determined that he would make the Finance Committee an Ad Hoc Committee and the group would be called to meet as needed. Board Members appointed to the committee were Randy Agnew and Mark Kulass. A third board member is needed to complete the committee and Chair Tidd will be actively taking volunteers and will make appointments as needed.

Tidd advised the Board that he said he had not finalized his decision on having an Executive Committee and would be reporting back with a decision.

4.4 High 5! Award

This award recognizes an employee who has performed an outstanding service or achievement in any one of the following areas: Leadership, Safety, Customer Service, Effort, Innovation, Teamwork, and Efficiency Improvements.

Coach Operator Grant Bowen-Picard was nominated by his peers. Dispatcher Ian Phillips noted on his nomination form that Bowen-Picard should be nominated for being an alert and active participant in our community when he recognized a person who had been reported as missing and upon recognizing the guest called into headquarters to have the dispatcher alert authorities. His nomination outlined: "*Grant deserves to be commended for his extra effort and attentiveness.*"

5. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

5.1 COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Mandate

General Manager Richard DeRock addressed the Board and clarified that this item had been part of the agenda before the January 13, 2022 US Supreme Court decision to stop the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issuance of an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) requiring private employers, with 100 or more employees, to adopt written policies and procedures either mandating vaccination against COVID-19 or requiring employees to undergo weekly testing.

DeRock emphasized that this item no longer was an action item, but was kept on the agenda with the intent that the Board be aware that should Governor Jay Inslee implement a Washington Industry Safety and Health Act (WISHA) regulation, the draft plan created for this ETS would be a starting draft for Link Transit.

No action taken.

5.2 Zero Fare Pilot Program

Planning and Development Manager Cristina Barone provided a PowerPoint presentation on Link Transit's Zero Fare pilot program. The presentation provided high-level findings of the mid-pilot experience, a detailed process of the fare implementation process, and the recommendation to continue the pilot program through June 2022. Barone finalized her presentation by stating that if the Board chose to continue the pilot program through June 2022, no action was needed at this time, and continued to note that if and when the Board decided to re-implement fares, it could take staff at least six (6) months to carry out the process with January 2023 being the earliest starting point date. (Please see Attachment A)

Discussion took place and comments were made regarding the savings benefits incurred by not implementing fares. The significant price of technology updates

needed to collect and count the fares was noted. Barone stated she could provide and focus on reporting those figures as part of her final data analysis.

No action taken.

5.3 Authorization to recruit and fill the Purchasing Agent Position

Administrative Services Manager Lynn Bourton reported the need to add a Purchasing Agent to the Finance department and provided details of the recent resignation of the Contract/Procurement Specialist.

Bourton provided background and described the reconfiguration of the department since 2020, when the department had both a Procurement Specialist and Contracts Specialist. The position was merged into one, when the previous Procurement Specialist had to take a long term absence due to illness. Bourton reported that The Contract Specialist had recently taken a new position outside of the organization and the former Procurement Specialist had since then also tendered his resignation and while reviewing the situation it was determined that it would be appropriate to recruit for a new Contracts Specialist and, at the same time, create an additional position of Purchasing Agent that would be responsible for purchasing items (that would not be labor related) of value between \$3,000 and \$40,000. Bourton indicated that anything over \$40,000 would be duties under the Contract Specialist. She finalized by reviewing the impact on the 2022 budget of \$85,663 for wages and benefits annualized from date of hire.

Clarification took place on the structure of the department and Bourton noted that the Contract/Procurement Specialist (which is currently open) would oversee the new Purchasing Agent position and would be responsible for purchases over \$40,000.

Board Action:

Jim Fletcher moved to authorize to recruit and fill the new purchasing agent position.

Bob Bugert seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor with 11 voting board members present for this vote.

***Motion Carried
Unanimously***

5.3 Confluence Parkway Participation

General Manager Richard DeRock detailed that over the past five years, the City of Wenatchee, in partnership with Link Transit, Douglas County, the Chelan-Douglas Transportation Council, WSDOT, the Chelan PUD and many others had applied for funding for a connected series of projects that has been labeled as the Apple Capital Loop.

The Confluence Parkway project that was part of the series of projects has been of high importance to Link Transit as it is a corridor that impacts the way Link Transit currently operates. DeRock described how the congestion and additional distance (from Olds Station to Columbia Station) would add significant annual operational costs. He noted that this project had undergone several cycles and expressed the desire to strategically change tactics. DeRock would like to work in collaboration with the City of Wenatchee to apply for a smaller project-specific grant and emphasize the public transportation benefit and key role in development of our Upper Valley Express – Bus Rapid Transit Service.

DeRock finalized by stating that as envisioned the Parkway would be owned by the City of Wenatchee. Link Transit would only take the lead in applying for funding and in developing an appropriate inter-local agreement to engage consulting and legal assistance to lead the application for grants for a transit-oriented rural project.

It was important for DeRock to mention the transit value in projects in region and mentioned the initial conversations with Douglas County regarding the development of the Wentachii Landing project.

Board Action:

Randy Agnew moved to authorize staff to work with the City of Wenatchee to develop an appropriate inter-local agreement to engage consulting and legal assistance to lead the application for grants for a transit-oriented rural project.
Mark Kulaas seconded the motion.

Members of the Board asked for clarification and the responsibility of the matching requirements for any awarded funds. DeRock indicated those were details needed to be discussed and would be addressed through the Interlocal agreement with the City of Wenatchee. Board Member Straub indicated he could not support or feel comfortable with Link Transit being responsible for any match requirements. DeRock finalized by stating that the Interlocal agreement would come to the Board for approval before it was carried out.

VOTE: *11 in favor, and 1 abstention* with 12 voting board members present for this vote.

Motion Carried

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1 Human Resources Staffing Monthly Report

Lynn Bourton reported that as an organization Link Transit had made a commitment to give a Monthly hiring report due to the difficulty in recruiting employees.

Bourton reported:

- (19) Candidates had applied for the Dispatch Reservationist, (7) of them will be testing and moving on to interviews.
- (20) Candidates had applied for Operations Supervisor – (10) of those candidates will be moving forward to the testing phase.
- (15) Candidates had applied for Accounting Assistant Position and one was offered the position with a start date of February 1, 2022.
- (6) Candidates applied for the Maintenance Service Worker position, (1) was hired with a start date of January 5th, 2022.
- (5) Candidates had applied for the Travel Trainer position and (2) will be moving forward to interviewing.
- (5) Candidates had applied for the Transportation Options Specialist / Vanpool Coordinator position and interviews will be determined in the next week.

Bourton concluded her report by highlighting and noting that the most difficult rank to fill is the Coach Operator position(s) and noted a total of (95) Coach Operators were budgeted for 2022. The current roster reflects (84) positions filled, with a new class of (5) to begin the week of January 24th, (1) individual has quit – for a total net of 88 Coach Operators at the end of January. (8) Of those are out and only (70) are available to drive.

DeRock highlighted and acknowledged Operations Manager Howard Johnson for being able to cover shifts under the latest spike in Covid-19 cases.

6.2 Monthly Financial Report

The Board were provided an overview of Agency's financial activity through December 31, 2021.

2021 Sales Tax:

◆ December 2021 sales tax (<i>earned in the 10/2021</i>)	\$	1,912,997
◆ Over budgeted amount for the month by 24%	\$	369,870
◆ YTD sales tax collection	\$	17,473,468
◆ YTD budget amount	\$	13,428,943
◆ Over YTD budgeted amount by 30.1%	\$	4,044,525
◆ Last year's YTD sales tax amount	\$	14,252,112
◆ Over last year's YTD sales tax amount by 22.6%	\$	3,221,356

2021 Operating Budget-to-Actual:

◆ Budget year elapsed = 100%	\$	19,349,893
◆ Operating budget spent = 95%	\$	<u>18,286,247</u>
◆ <Over> Under Budgeted Amount	\$	1,063,646

2021 Capital:

◆ BYD Slow Chg-Hot Start-Beckstead Electric	\$	9,970
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Cash Accounts:

◆ Cash w/Treasurer – 2021 over 2020	\$	1,209,007
◆ Investments – 2021 over 2020	\$	10,226,803
◆ Contingencies Reserve – 2021 over 2020	\$	100,000
◆ Vehicle Reserves – 2021 over 2020	\$	(112,292)
◆ FTA Vehicle Reserves – 2021 over 2020	\$	14,900
◆ Facility/Equipment Reserves – 2021 over 2020	\$	110,299

6.3 July 2022 Service Update

Cristina Barone provided a Staff report on the Service Redesign: Phase One Service Plan for July 2022. Her report included the Transit Study project recap, the Phase One Service Plan, the Outreach Approach and finalized with a timeline for the next steps. A public hearing and Board approval of the plan is scheduled for the March Board meeting. (Please see Attachment B)

Marc Straub exited the meeting at 4:25pm.

6.4 System Performance Report

This report provides an overview of how the System performed during the past month, which is reflective of how Agency is meeting the annual performance goals that were developed through the annual budgeting process and formally adopted by the Board.

Ridership:

December 2021 Fixed Route Ridership Stats:

- Monday – Friday an average of 2296 boardings, down 3.7% from November 2021 and up 7.5% from November 2020 and down 29.2% since Pre-Covid.
- Saturday – an average of 1560 boardings,
- Sunday – an average of 888 boardings

Paratransit:

December 2021 Paratransit Ridership Stats:

- Monday – Friday an average of 208 daily boardings,
- Saturday – an average of 94 boardings
- Sunday – an average of 51 boardings,

Cost per Hour:

- Cost per hour was \$149.67 for both fixed-route and Paratransit in December 2021

Complaints:

- 11 complaints were reported in December 2021

Class 1 or higher preventable collisions

- 1 – class 1 preventable collision occurred in December 2021

DeRock summarized the lack of ridership from the college student sector, and the need to find a market to make up the ridership.

6.3 General Manager’s Report

Richard DeRock shared a very brief summary on the proposed Highway 2 traffic flow and Safety bill introduced to the Washington State Senate by Senator Hawkins. The bill was introduced as an effort to improve traffic flow and safety along US Highway 2 between Wenatchee and Monroe.

7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

All business listed on the Agenda had been addressed and with no further business to conduct, Chair Tidd adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

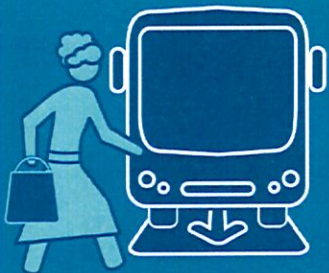
Minutes Submitted by 
Anna Laura Leon, Clerk of the Board

LINK TRANSIT

Board of Directors
Zero Fare Pilot Program
Update

PRESENTED BY:
CRISTINA BARONE

JANUARY 18, 2022

A graphic designed to look like a yellow cardboard ticket with a red circular icon of a bus. The text on the ticket reads:

**RIDE FOR
FREE**

ANYTIME | ANYWHERE

KIDS • ADULTS • SENIORS

YOUR WAY TO GO!

Link Transit

Attachment A:

LINK TRANSIT ZERO FARE PILOT PROGRAM RECAP

- Fares were suspended in March 2020 due to COVID-19
- Transit Study process reviewed likely **costs** and **benefits** of transitioning to zero-fare operation, with considerations that included:
 - Peer agency experience
 - Fare technology costs
 - Foregone farebox revenue
 - Agency fare collection costs
 - Ridership and productivity increase analysis
 - Max load, capacity, and dwell time analysis
 - Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) funding
 - LinkPlus paratransit impacts analysis
 - Equity, affordability, and livability objectives



LINK TRANSIT ZERO FARE PILOT PROGRAM RECAP

- In May 2021, the Board authorized a one-year zero-fare pilot program through June 30, 2022 to allow Link to review:
 1. Unanticipated increases in ADA paratransit demand
 2. Levels of inappropriate behavior on the buses and our transit facilities
 3. Levels of increased transit ridership that the zero-fare system encouraged



LINK TRANSIT MID-PILOT EXPERIENCE

1. Current LinkPlus ridership similar to pre-COVID level
2. To date, Link has not experienced inappropriate behavior challenges attributable to zero-fare service that give us cause for concern
3. Staff believes zero-fare policy can continue encouraging fixed-route ridership
 - o Fixed-route ridership has recovered more than many other systems but still below 2019 level



FARE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

- If the Board decides to reinstate fares, staff would need to begin work now to be able to implement on July 1, 2022
- Process would include:
 - Developing the proposed fare policy
 - Reinstate fare policy from prior to COVID-19 or develop a completely new policy
 - Determine path forward for farebox technology upgrades
 - Conducting public outreach and public hearing
 - Training for Link staff
- Timing would be challenging because it would direct staff time and public attention away from planned service changes



ZERO FARE RECOMMENDATION

- Continue pilot program through June 2022 and conduct an **in-depth analysis** based on a full year of data
 - Review data trends
 - Gather insight about operator experience
- **Understand all pros/cons** of reinstating fares, continuing the pilot program, or transitioning to a permanent zero fare system
- If the Board chooses to continue the pilot program and not schedule fare implementation for July 1, no action is needed at this time
 - Earliest potential fare implementation would be approx. January 2023



LINK TRANSIT

Board of Directors
Service Redesign:
Phase One Service Plan

PRESENTED BY:
CRISTINA BARONE

JANUARY 18, 2022



Attachment B:



TODAY'S AGENDA

Transit Study Project Recap

Phase One Service Plan

Outreach Approach

Next Steps



Transit Study Project Recap

MOVING LINK FORWARD

- Build on Vision 2020
- Confirm Link Transit guiding mission and goals
- Improve route convenience and directness
- Meet demand for longer hours of service
- Tailor services to the operating environment
- Evaluate potential for zero-fare service



The Wenatchee urban area is expected to add **25,000 more people by 2045**

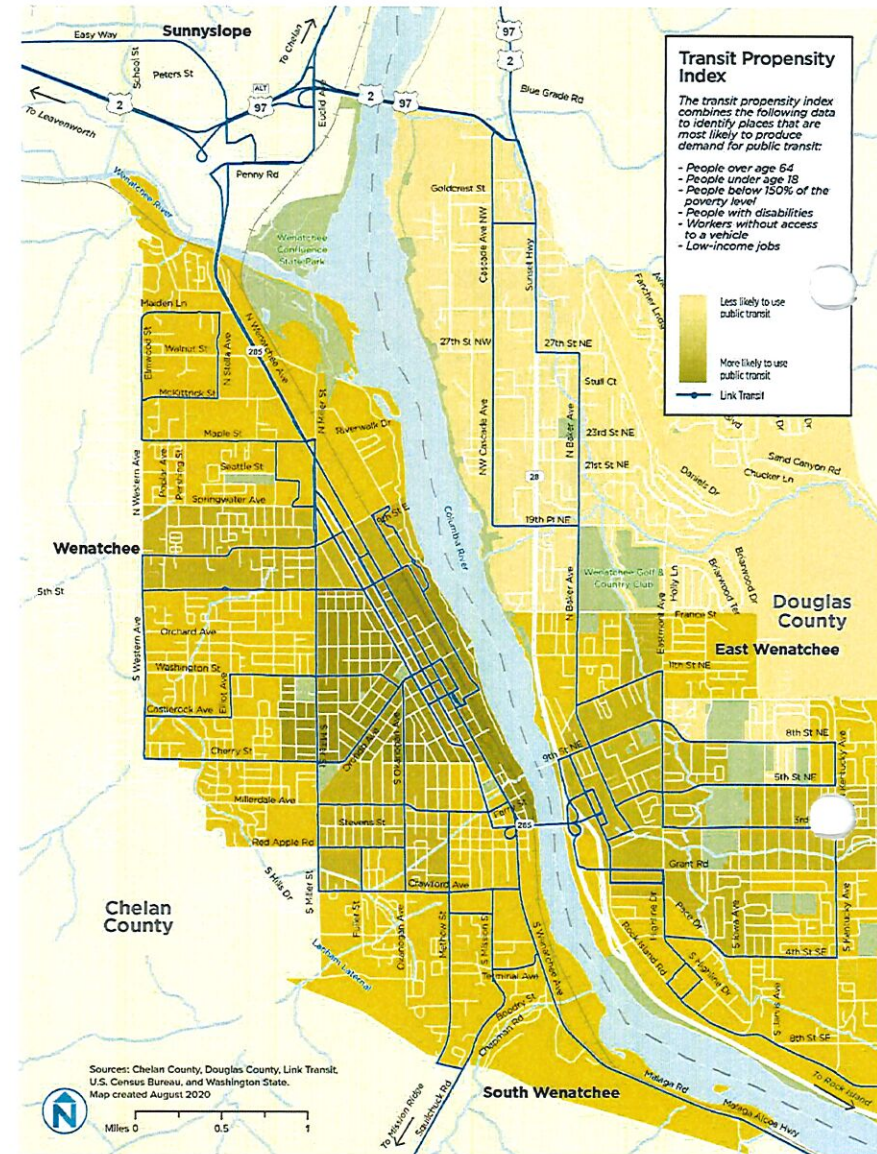
WHAT DOES THE MARKET SAY?

Current Demand

- Population characteristics
- Employment density
- Travel patterns
- Land-use characteristics

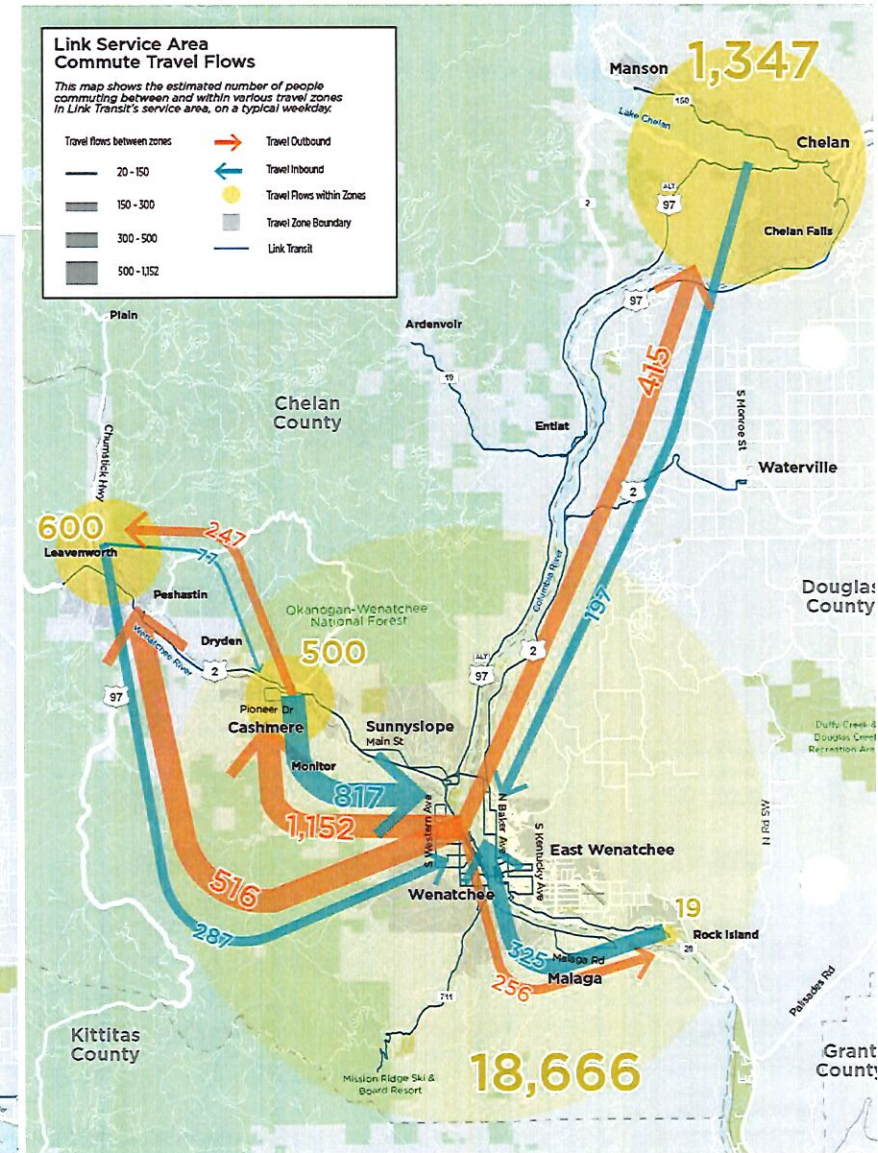
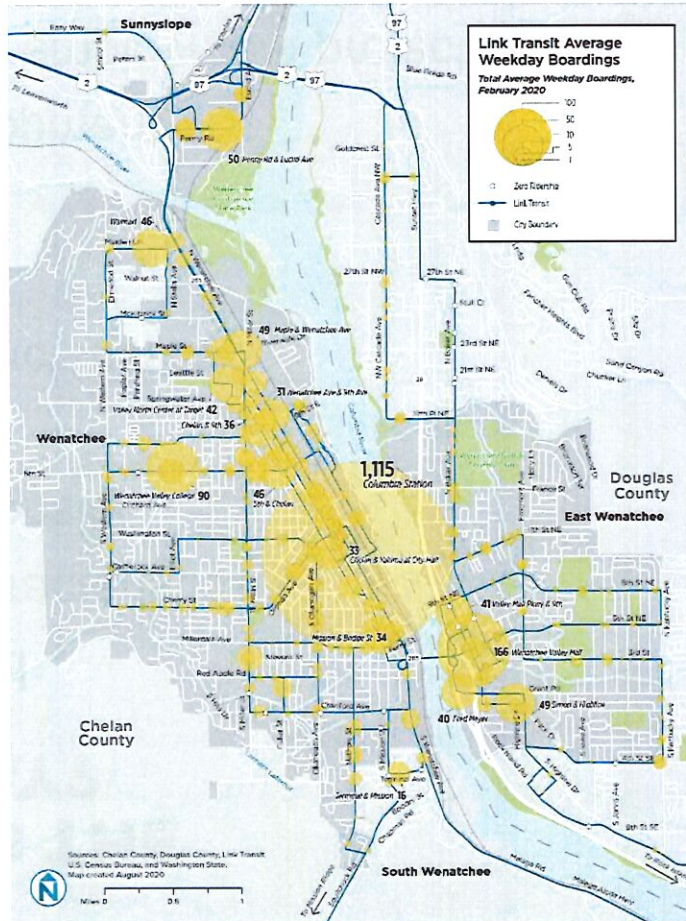
Future Demand

- Planned development
- Population and employment projections



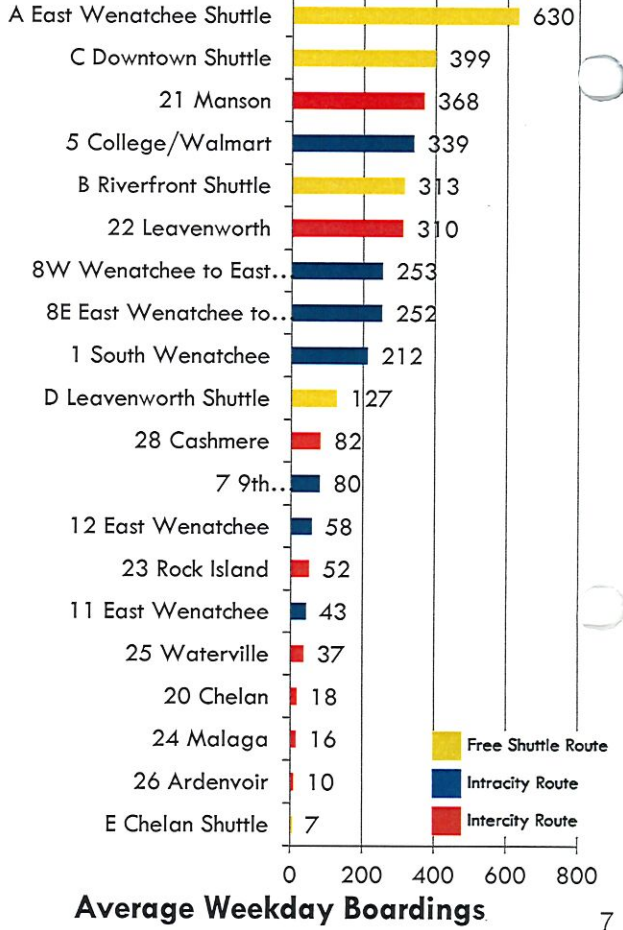
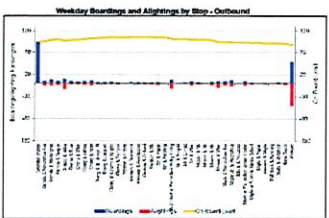
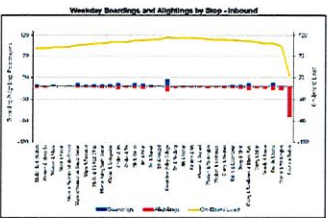
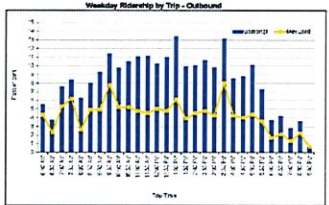
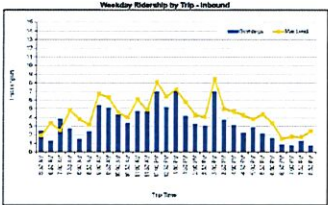
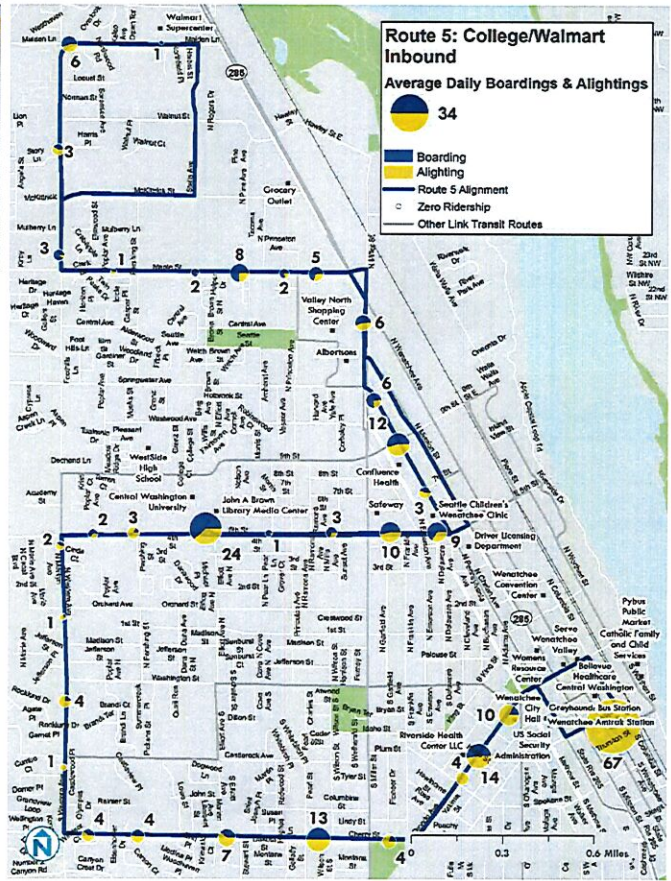
WHAT DO THE NUMBERS SAY?

- Ridership
- Productivity
- On-time performance
- Commute travel



ROUTE-BY-ROUTE RIDERSHIP MAPS AND PROFILES

Route 5 College/Walmart Weekday	Route Productivity Summary			Route Operations Summary		
	Activity	Service Hours	Probability	On-Time Performance	On-Board Load	On-Board Load
Link Transit connecting our communities	Boardings	Alightings	Service Hours	% On-Time	% Full	Max Load Locations
Hours	33	33	12.1	95%	2%	110
Chalkboard	33	33	12.1	95%	2%	110
1. Inland to Wenatchee/Vale	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
2. Inland to Lake to WA State	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
3. South to Wenatchee Valley College	2.7	2.7	2.2	95%	2%	0
4. Inland to Valley College to Chelan & Wenatchee	2.6	2.6	2.2	95%	2%	0
5. Chelan & Wenatchee to Courtenay Station	3.8	3.8	3.2	95%	2%	0
6. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
7. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
8. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
9. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
10. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
11. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
12. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
13. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
14. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
15. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
16. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
17. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
18. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
19. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
20. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
21. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
22. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
23. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
24. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
25. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
26. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
27. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
28. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
29. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
30. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
31. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
32. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0
33. Inland to Wenatchee	0.5	0.5	0.5	95%	2%	0



WHAT DO THE PEOPLE SAY?

- Bus operators
- Riders and non-riders
- Key stakeholders
- Link Transit Board



HELP MOVE LINK FORWARD!



TAKE OUR SURVEY!

Link Transit wants your feedback on proposed changes to public transportation in Chelan and Douglas counties. These proposals suggest changing where bus routes go, the times of day and days of the week they operate, and how often they arrive. Other ideas include changing Link to a zero-fare system. Learn more by visiting our online open house at

www.MovingLinkForward.com

or scan the QR code to take the survey.

Scan this QR Code with your phone to take the survey!



www.linktransit.com
509.662.1155

LIVE 17

ZERO-FARE SERVICE

Benefits include:

- Ridership increases
- Better reliability
- Easier administration
- Overcoming the 'unknown' of how to pay
- Supporting equity and affordability goals
- Increasing community recognition and pride



duda como la pandemia disminuye es algo que. El enlace será querer y priorizará. Puede hacer que el sistema sea más

zoom

MOVING LINK FORWARD BOARD PRIORITIES



Increase ridership and productivity while balancing geographic coverage



Provide lifeline service for those who need it most



Offer high-quality service to connect the region's communities



Provide fast and direct service to make transit competitive with driving



Explore service alternatives for locations difficult to serve with fixed-route transit



Encourage affordability of the transit system for customers



Evaluate and responsibly deliver what was promised to voters in Vision 2020

SERVICE SCENARIO THEMES

Three different scenarios were tested:

1. Frequency/productivity

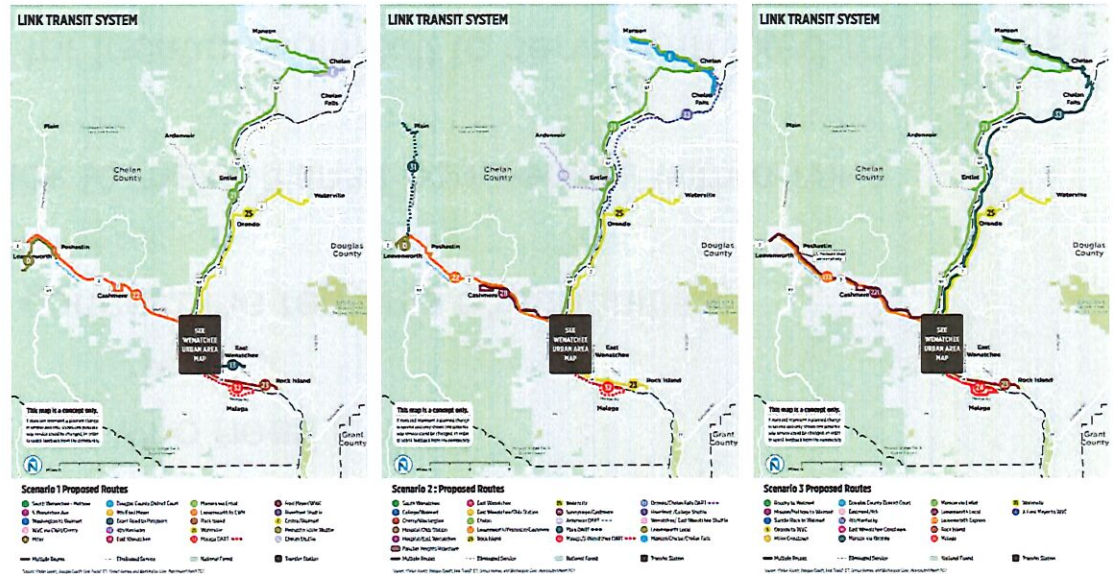
- Focus on improving service in places where the most people ride

2. Coverage

- Serve more areas and introduce new service types

3. Directness

- Focus on faster service to destinations



MOVING LINK FORWARD OUTREACH PROCESS

- Public outreach conducted in March 2021
 - Nearly 800 total responses
- **Popular** proposed changes:
 - More service on evenings and weekends
 - Service to Pangborn Airport
 - Extension to Icicle Creek Center for the Arts/Sleeping Lady, and potentially to trailheads in Leavenworth
 - Express service between Leavenworth and Wenatchee
 - Connections to Plain/Lake Wenatchee
 - Service to Chelan Walmart and medical facilities
 - Service to Saddle Rock for outdoor recreation

HELP MOVE LINK FORWARD!

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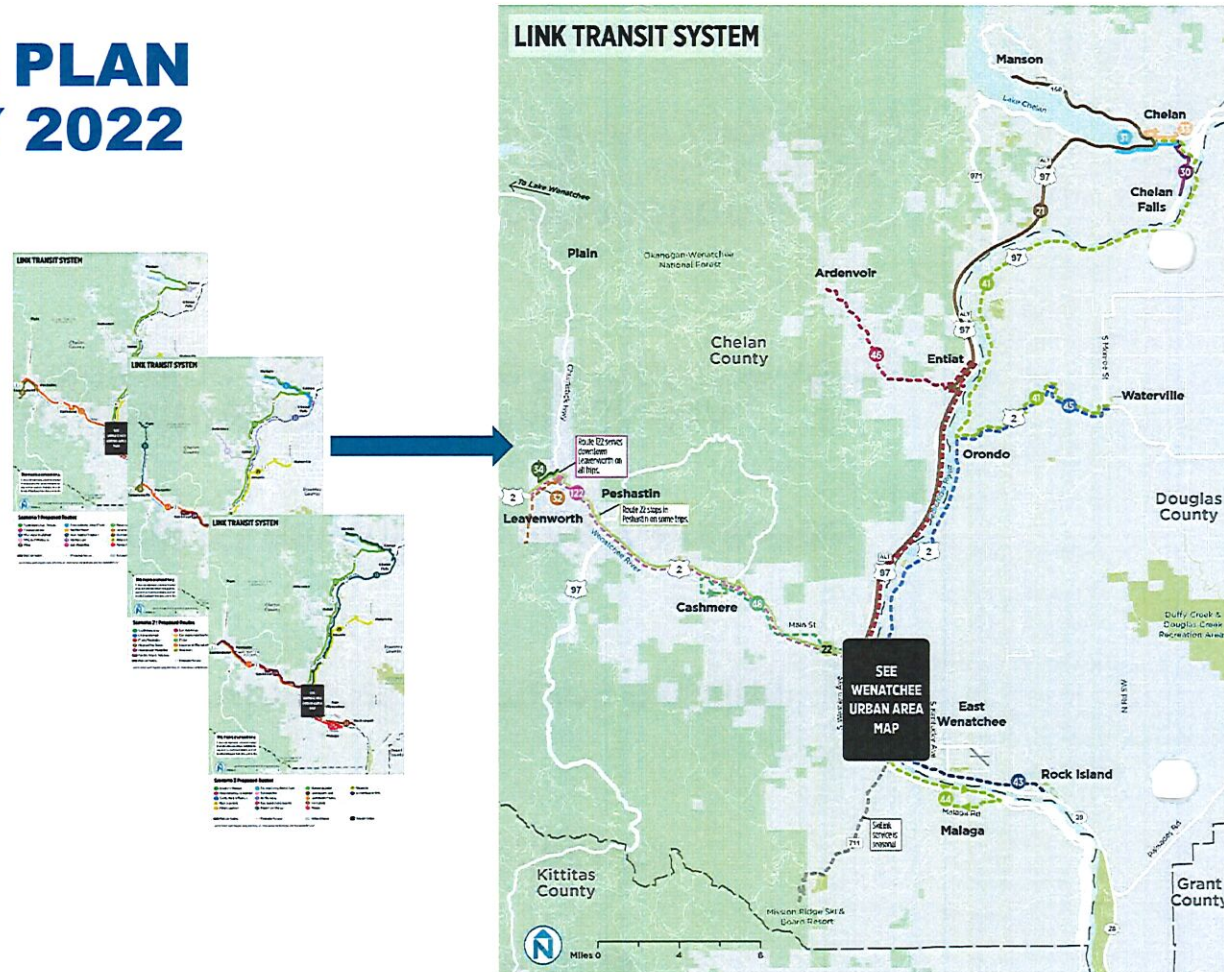
“Chelan has sorely needed a Walmart destination route.”



Phase One Service Plan

PHASE ONE SERVICE PLAN PROPOSED FOR JULY 2022

- Transit Study recommended plan approved in June 2021
 - Based on survey data, Board feedback, staff/operator input, existing conditions analysis, and best practices
 - Combined **most-supported ideas** from public feedback
- Phase One Service Plan provides essential **service backbone** for continued expansion
 - Represents **~107,000** fixed-route revenue hours
 - Approximately 6% increase
 - Scaled to fit our current challenges with hiring new operators



PHASE ONE SERVICE PLAN HIGHLIGHTS



- **Buses arriving more often** connecting to popular destinations



- **Faster and more direct service** that maintains existing coverage



- **Express service** connecting Leavenworth and Wenatchee



- **Improved access to destinations**, including Chelan Walmart, Central Washington Hospital, and Wenatchee Valley College



- **Service to new areas and new regional connections**, including Boodry Street area, Saddle Rock trailhead, Chelan Falls, Icicle Road, Leavenworth Ski Hill, and Waterville/Chelan

WENATCHEE URBAN AREA SERVICE

- **Direct service**
 - East Wenatchee to CWH and WVC
 - East Wenatchee to Fred Meyer/Columbia Station
- **15-minute service**
 - Wenatchee Ave to Walmart
 - Orondo Street
- **New service:**
 - Boodry Street area
 - Saddle Rock trailhead



CHELAN AREA SERVICE

- **Consistent service all day** from Wenatchee
- **New circulators**
 - New connection to Chelan Falls
 - Serve Walmart on every trip
- **New regional connection to** Waterville



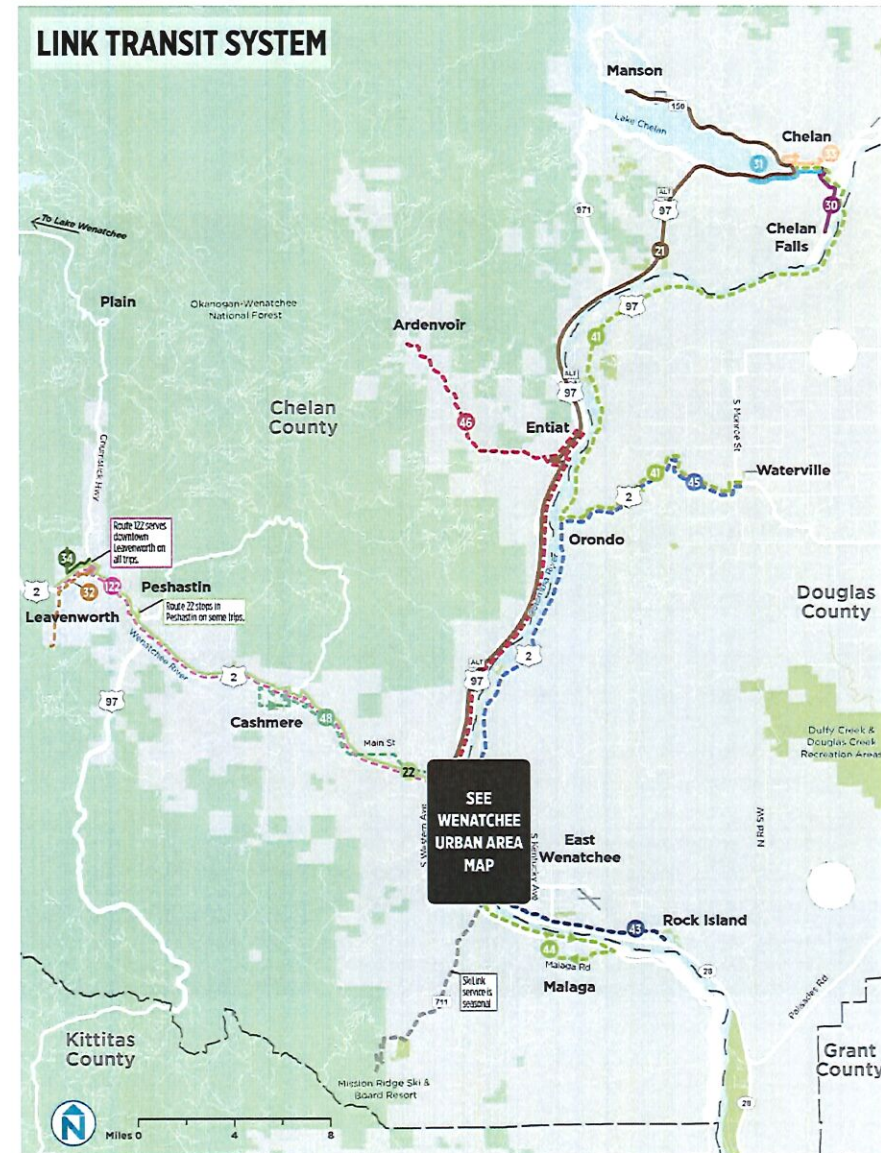
LEAVENWORTH AREA SERVICE

- **New express service to Wenatchee**
 - Direct hospital connection at shift times
- **Streamlined Route 22**
 - Serves downtown Leavenworth on all trips
 - Hybrid scheduled/on-call service in Peshastin
- **Reimagined local circulators**
 - Serves new destinations including Icicle Road and Leavenworth Ski Hill
 - Service on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday



RURAL AREA SERVICE

- Similar coverage as existing service
- Some adjustments to route schedules
- Areas served include:
 - 41 Waterville/Chelan
 - New regional connection
 - 43 Rock Island
 - 44 Malaga/South Wenatchee
 - 45 Waterville/Wenatchee
 - 46 Ardenvoir
 - 48 Sunnyslope/Cashmere



ACCOMPANYING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Wenatchee

- Streetside bus stops at Columbia Station
- S Wenatchee Ave/Malaga-Alcoa Highway
- WVC turnaround on 9th

East Wenatchee

- Grant Road crossings at Nevada and Mary
- Roundabout connecting Cascade and Sunset
- East Wenatchee Park-and-Ride comfort station

Chelan/Leavenworth/Waterville

- Chelan Walmart Park-and-Ride
- Icicle Road & US 2 roundabout and layover area
- NextBus signage
- Waterville comfort station



FUTURE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS STILL NECESSARY TO MEET LINK'S PROMISE TO VOTERS

- Expected outcomes
 - Better service for existing guests
 - Improved access to jobs, services, and major destinations
 - Faster service to more locations
 - Attracting new riders to the system
 - Positioning Link for future success
- Implementing service backbone now means Link can **quickly scale up service** as staffing resources allow

DIRECT Xpress

Why Change?

We began a comprehensive analysis of Xpress operations nearly two years ago. After assessing existing service for opportunities, we incorporated input from more than 9,000 comments from our riders, as well as transit experts, local government leaders, and area employers. The result? Changes to every route in the system that will help make Xpress more valuable for our region's commuters.

Goals

Improve

- MORE RELIABLE**
Improve the system and ensure Xpress is a commute service passengers can rely on. Improved routing will avoid congested intersections, tight turns, and excess traffic lights, helping Xpress buses move more reliably through the city and providing for better on-time performance.
- MORE FLEXIBLE**
Add more options to meet the diverse needs of more commuters in the region. Extended service hours in most corridors will enable more flexibility for workers. Additional frequency during peak hours will cut wait times between buses, sometimes by more than half.
- MORE INTUITIVE**
Xpress can be confusing, especially for first-time riders. Making Xpress easier to understand by simplifying routes and implementing more intuitive bus stop locations to help make Xpress easier to navigate. Improved signage, maps, and schedules, as well as a reorganized website and a new bus tracking app will help passengers get the information they need to better utilize the service.
- MORE SERVICE**
Xpress is investing in the future and exploring long-term expansion plans and improvements. In 2016, Xpress plans to increase service to more destinations, more frequently, with extended service hours. Over the next decade, Xpress plans to add new routes, park-and-rides, and destinations, as well as all-day Xpress service to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. Additional trips and park-and-ride facilities will leverage the future expansion of Georgia Express Lanes across the region.

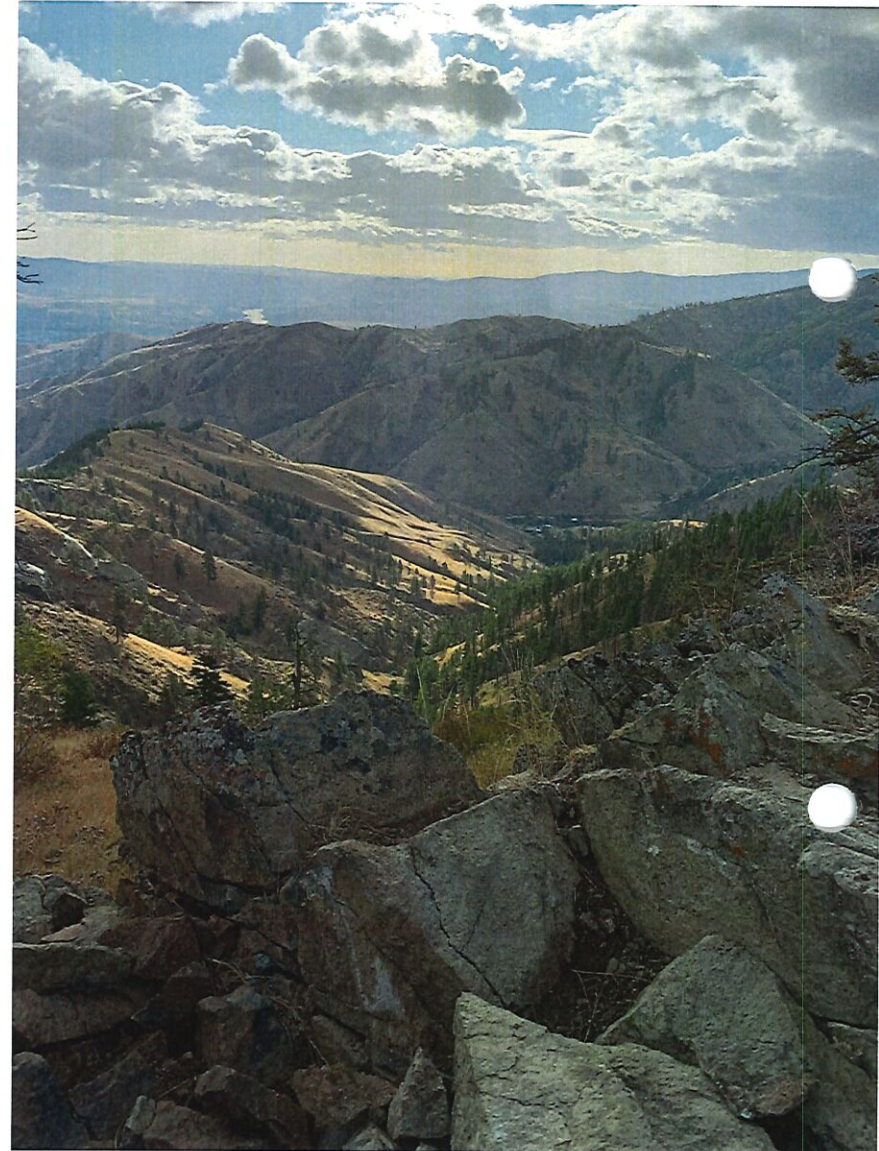
Service

Direct Xpress

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS PROMISED TO VOTERS

- **Wenatchee/East Wenatchee Urban Area**
 - More service to new areas, including Grant Road, Pangborn Airport area, Walla Walla Point Park, and Town Toyota Center
 - Earlier and later hours of service
 - Buses arriving more often
 - More Saturday and Sunday service

*Link will continually review **route performance and community needs** to determine additional improvements, as appropriate*



PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS PROMISED TO VOTERS

- **Leavenworth and Chelan Areas**
 - More service to new areas, including Plain and Lake Wenatchee
 - Later evening service to/from Wenatchee
 - Service better targeted to hospital night shift
 - Buses arriving more often
 - More Saturday and Sunday service
- **Rural Areas, including Waterville, Ardenvoir, Malaga, Rock Island, and Cashmere**
 - More Saturday and Sunday service
 - Deviated fixed-route service

*Link will continually review **route performance** and **community needs** to determine additional improvements, as appropriate*

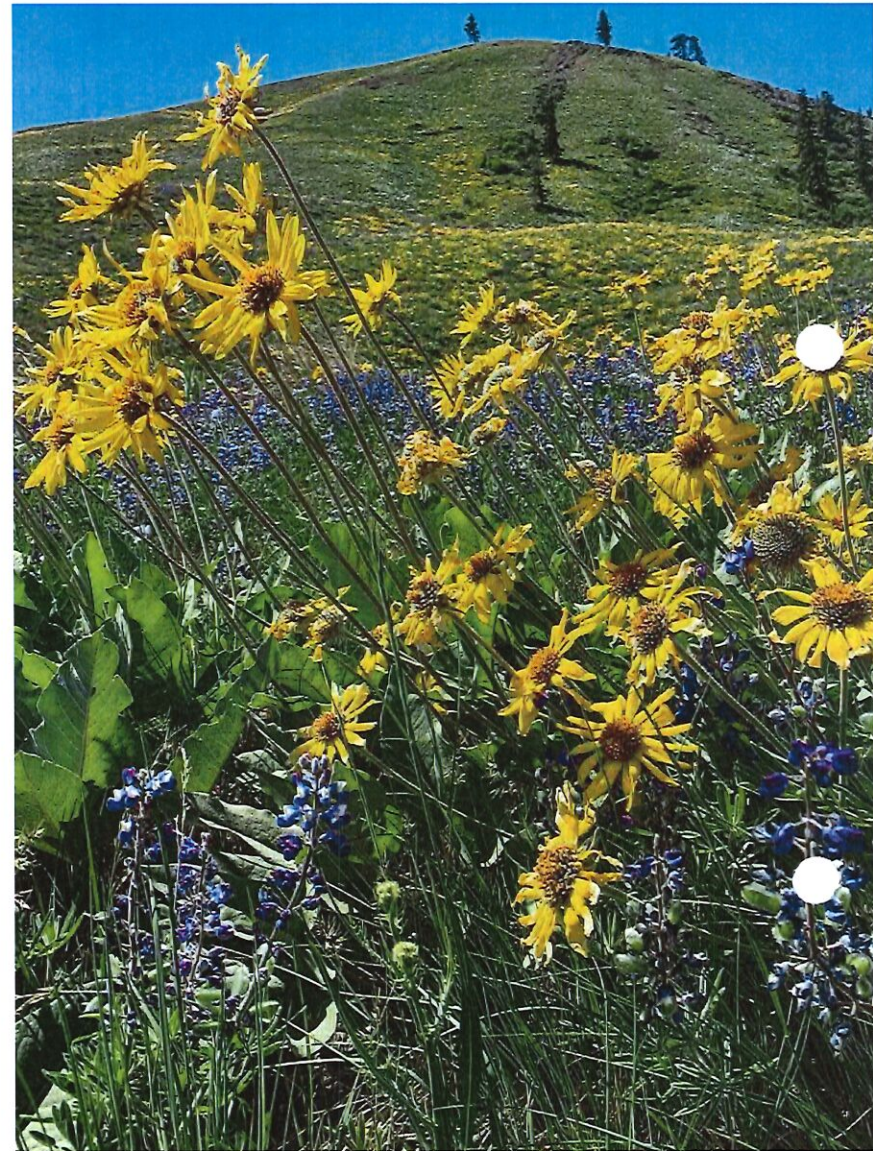




Outreach Approach

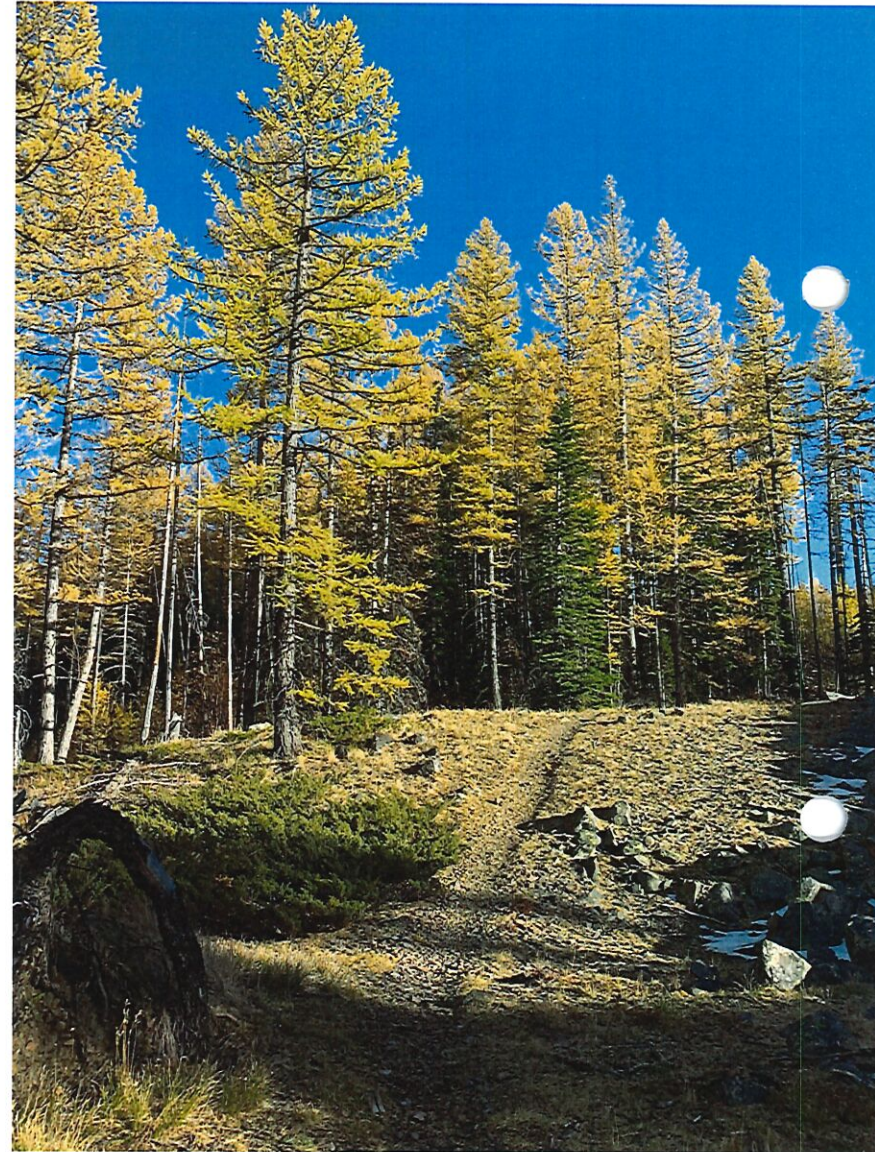
OUTREACH GOALS

- Four-week outreach window from **January 24 to February 18**
- Gather feedback from:
 - Existing transit riders
 - General public
 - Community stakeholders
- Focus on **Phase One Service Plan**
 - Draft route maps and schedules for review
 - Feedback from the public and stakeholders will be integrated into final implementation plan as feasible



OUTREACH PROCESS

- Opportunities for feedback:
 - Virtual open house website
 - Online and paper surveys
 - Coordination with other groups (DD Provider Community, Mobility Council, Senior Service Network, Interagency Network, City of Wenatchee, Mission View Elementary)
 - NCW Life Q&A
 - Public 'pop-up' meetings
 - Stakeholder coordination
 - Link operator input
- Notification strategy:
 - Posters and flyers on transit vehicles and at transit centers
 - Door hangers in targeted locations
 - Press release
 - Radio and print outlet advertisements
 - E-newsletter
 - Social media posts

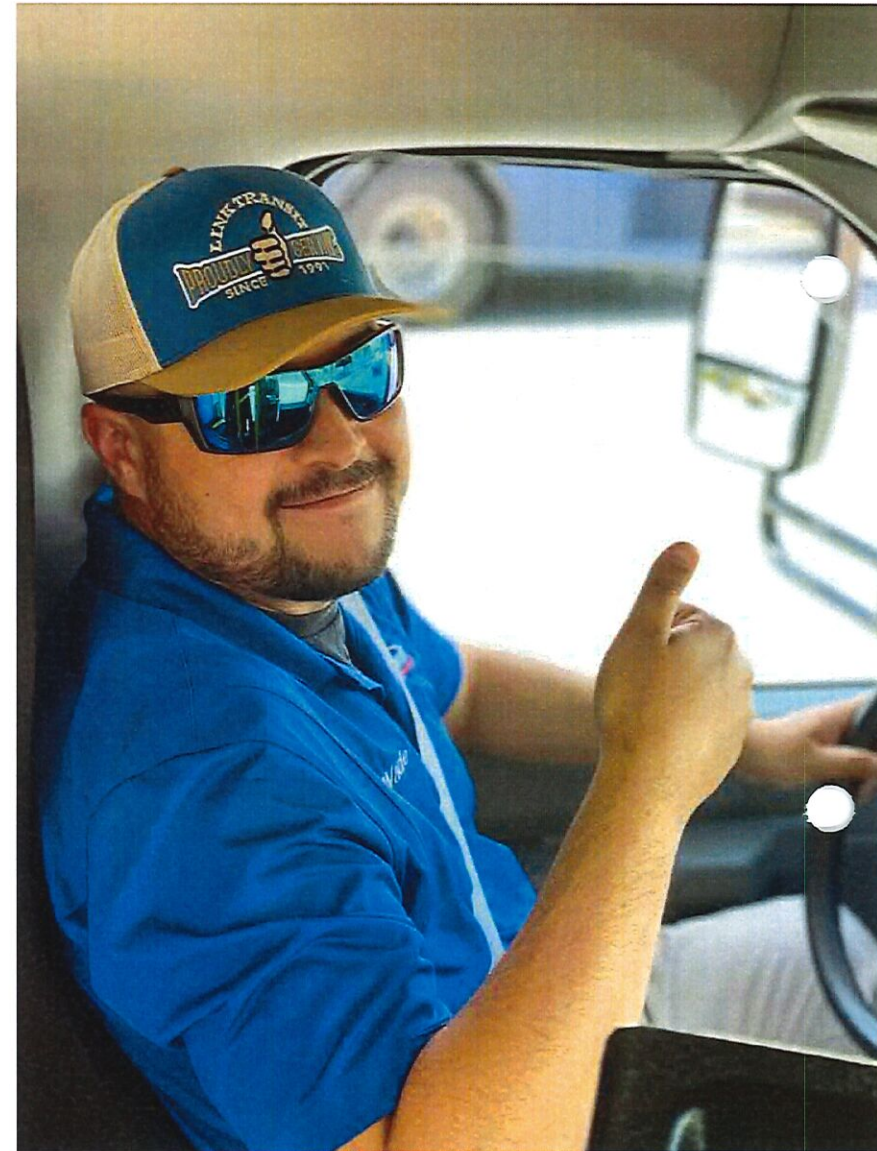




Next Steps

NEXT STEPS

- Begin outreach process
- Provide update at February Board meeting
- Refine Phase One Service Plan as necessary
- Conduct Public Hearing and seek approval at March Board meeting
- Continue with implementation planning
- Implement changes in July 2022



CURRENT SCHEDULE (JULY 2022 IMPLEMENTATION)

